GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3291
ANSWERED ON:06.09.2007
ACQUISITION OF ARTIFACTS
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Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the institutions of national importance engaged in acquisition, preservation and restoration of art objects of historical importance in the country, location-wise;

(b) whether the functions of most of these institutions overlapped and there is no synergy among them;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government proposes to consider any consistent policy in respect of acquisition of artifacts;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the investigation of the theft of a fifth century Buddha Head from Sarnath from the Museum in December, 2004 has been completed;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) the action taken against the persons found responsible?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM & CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) The National Museum, New Delhi, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, Indian Museum, Kolkata, Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, Allahabad Museum, Allahabad, and Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, are the national level institutions under the Ministry of Culture engaged in acquisition, preservation and restoration of art objects. In addition, the Archaeological Survey of India with its Headquarters in New Delhi and National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, Lucknow are also engaged in preservation and restoration of art objects at the national level.

(b) & (c): All these institutions have their distinct identity, aims and objects. However, they collaborate with each other as and when necessary.

(d) & (e): The acquisition of art objects is done by each institution based on the nature of its mandates, requirement and existing collections. Since their aims and objects are different and some of these are autonomous managed by their Board of Trustees/Societies, there can be no single art acquisition policy for all of them.

(f) to (h) The case of theft of the fifth century Buddha Head from Sarnath from the Indian Museum, Kolkata in December, 2004 has been handed over to the CBI.